

The Eighth Wonder

In Which Young Edward Bryant Makes a Great Discovery

By A. S. M. HUTCHINSON'

YOU probably could not say straight off what were the Seven Wonders of the World. Personally, I am always sure of the Pyramids of Egypt and sometimes have been able to add the Hanging Gardens of Babylon. I often with a flush of pride recall supplying, on one of my bright days, the Colossus of Rhodes; and I remember how profoundly stirred were the circles in which I move when at a learned talk, a young woman of our company added the Temple of Diana at Ephesus. But further than that—

Still, what's the odds? No one is any the better for knowing what were the Seven Wonders; nor for that matter is any one, knowing them, necessarily more widely read. Take the case of Edward Bryant. Edward, when he mounted the upper deck of the trampcar that was to take him to a meeting of the Excelsior Literary Society at which was to be read a paper on the Seven Wonders of the World, hadn't an idea of them, not even the Pyramids. He opened the packet of cigarettes he had just bought and took out with a cigarette the picture card given with the packet; and lo! there was on the one side a drawing of the Pyramids and on the other the caption "The Seven Wonders of the World" and their names.

"Coh! That's a coincidence for you!" exclaimed Edward to himself; and on a sudden thought pondered the seven till he had got them by heart.

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ARRIVED at the lecture hall and seated among his fellow members of the Excelsior, Edward proceeded at once to apply the sudden thought which had caused him to commit to memory the Seven. The vacant seat he found (an end seat) placed him next to a worthy couple, by name Mr. and Mrs. Hunt. Edward knew the Hunts only by sight, but it was the etiquette of the Excelsior Literary Society for neighbors at its gatherings to exchange a bow, a smile and a word or two, and these courtesies Edward with the Hunts therefore exchanged; then applied the results of that sudden thought of his:

"Ought to be interesting," said Edward, indicating his admission card on which was printed the subject of the evening paper.

"Indeed it should," agreed Mr. Hunt and held up his own card and read from it. "The Seven Wonders of the World," yes, indeed."

"Know what they were, I suppose?" said Edward carelessly.

Mrs. Hunt, who attended the Excelsior more for its social than for its instructive side, beamed. She liked this friendliness of this personable young man.

"No, we don't," said Mrs. Hunt, frankly and invitingly.

"Tell you if you like," said Edward, nonchalantly easing his collar.

Mr. Hunt gave him a keen look. "Eh, you know them?" inquired Mr. Hunt.

"Oh, rather," said Edward, "rather. Let me see." He spread out the fingers of one hand and ticked them off with

A Curious Industry.

ONE of the most curious industries in the world is that of an eel farm established on the coast of Denmark by an enterprising citizen of that country.

A dam was built on a fjord in Zealand with the intention of reclaiming some land for agriculture. The scheme fell through and one Nielsen conceived the idea of making the place an eel farm. Within the embankment there are about 300 acres of water, most of it about two feet deep. The surface of the water is a few feet above the level of the fjord, which lies on the other side of the embankment. The water of the lake is fresh and the fjord water is fairly salt, having a marine fauna and flora.

The owner keeps up the stock of eels in the lake by the introduction of elvers, which he catches in an ingenious manner. When the eel-fry put in an appearance in the fjord at the end of their long journey from the breeding-grounds in the Atlantic Ocean he lowers a rough crate heaped full of water weeds across the front of the sluice-gate. He then raises the gate so that a stream of fresh water flows through the crate and down a sloping channel to the fjord. The elvers, in search of fresh water, make their way upstream into the crate and remain entangled among the weeds, which every now and then are lifted, spread out and shaken over a piece of very fine meshed net.

Mr. Nielsen then collects the elvers in this way, instead of letting them have a free run to the lake, in order that he may know exactly how many he puts in every year.

Even more ingenious is the method he employs for capturing the full-grown eels. That also makes use of the migratory instinct that drives the mature eels to seek salt water. Slung from a framework of rough poles is a box or chest about twelve feet long, round the sides of which are openings about nine inches square. To each of these holes is attached a small conical-shaped eel-net of the ordinary kind, that opens into the box. There are also rows of holes that permit the circulation of water and the escape of undersized eels. The central part of the box is carried up so as to be above water when the rest of the box is submerged, and a hatch in the side of this raised part gives access to the interior.

By means of a watermill and a wooden chute salt water is pumped into the lake in front of the box for a day before a consignment is required. This attracts the eels, which want to migrate to the sea. At night the stream of salt water is led through the box by means of the chute, and thus entices the eels to enter. The box is then hoisted out of the water by a geared winch and the eels are removed.

The lake appears to contain plenty of natural food, but the owner also gives artificial food to the eels. He buys gobies and other unmarketable fish at a low rate, minces them in a machine worked by the windmill, and throws them into the lake loose. The market price of eels at Copenhagen varies from 10 to 25 cents a pound, and in one year alone Mr. Nielsen's catch amounted to over 15,000 pounds.

the other. "The Pyramids of Egypt, the Hanging Gardens of Babylon—" With the ease of one repeating household words he ran off six; with admirably studied effect paused before the seventh: "And, and, let me see; dear me, how stupid of me; ah, yes, of course; and the seventh the Pharos of Alexandria."

"Well!" exclaimed Mrs. Hunt; and it was perfectly clear from the tone of her "Well!" and from the admiring gaze at Edward with which she accompanied it that she was far less impressed by the wonderful Seven than by the fact of this likable young man thus familiarly knowing them. Mr. Hunt also gazed upon Edward with an obvious respect; and divers other members of the Excelsior near about who had inclined their ears towards Edward's voice and for the benefit of whose ears Edward had very kindly raised his voice, smiled and nodded thanks and were heard to whisper: "Very clever young man that young Edward Bryant."

It was a thoroughly impressive little triumph for Edward, and Edward was immensely pleased with himself. "By Jove, I'll stick to those cigarettes in future," said Edward to himself gratefully; and, happy chance, once more, came to his aid to rescue him from an appalling catastrophe, to the brink of which, in the midst of his satisfaction, Mrs. Hunt's next words suddenly projected him.

"And what?" said Mrs. Hunt, loud and clear, "and what was that last, last, that Pharos of Alexandria?"

Poor Edward! He hadn't a notion, not the faintest glimmer of an idea.

"Why," said Edward, "the Pharos of course—Hush. Just beginning You'll hear in a minute."

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"THE Seven Wonders of the World," began the lecturer, "as, of course, the members of a society such as this need not tell, were—"

Edward, after the first few sentences, heard never a word. He was day-dreaming; he was castling in chess. He was seeing himself swimming up in the world, always as listened to, always the most respectfully gazed upon, rapidly gaining place, power and wealth; and he was observing particularly in the admiring throng a beautiful girl whose hero he was and to whose feet triumphs would be brought. And he was waded from all this onto concentration on the lovely creature, creating her (for she did not exist) and imagining her; and he was thinking all this when suddenly he fund, to his amazement, so vividly and at such length had he been thinking it, that the lecture was over, the lights up, and these courtesies Edward with the Hunts therefore exchanged; then applied the results of that sudden thought of his:

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ONLY bits of all this can be selected for telling, and I would choose those bits on the one hand as they seemed to Edward peculiar to himself and never to have happened to anybody before, and on the other hand as they are common to all the Eighth Wonders and to all those three favored men on whom not only discovery but possession of an Eighth Wonder is bestowed.

There was that first night walking home with the Hunts and with Clarry. Four abreast could not be walked on the pavements they followed, and it was contrived by the parents that Edward walked part of the way with Mr. Hunt and part of the way with Mrs. Hunt, never with Clarry. The eighth wonder of the world.

Edward's mind again was swinging away. He would go in for this competition; he would win it; he would stand up there and read his paper to echoes of applause. The eighth wonder? What could it be? What should he choose? Wireless? The turbine engine? The aeroplane?

Theights, as has been said, were turned up. Edward's position in the hall was at the extreme end of one of the two horseshoe into which the chairs were drawn forward in semicircle about the lecturer's table. Edward thus looked directly upon the faces of the members seated at the farther horn of the semicircle and all of a sudden, lifting up his eyes in his exasperation—the Eighth Wonder? What? Which? The Eighth Wonder—all of a sudden, hitting him with a shock, and holding him with a breathless catch, Edward saw the Eighth Wonder of the World seated over against him!

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THE Eighth Wonder of the World wore a brown dress and had on her lap a brown hat trimmed with brown velvet. She had come in, evidently, while the lecture was in progress and the room in darkness, for she certainly had not been there when Edward last could see in that direction and as certainly Edward



"OH, AND I HAVE JUST REMEMBERED," SAID CLARRY, BRIGHTLY. "THAT I WON'T BE ABLE TO GO TO THE CONCERT WITH YOU MONDAY NIGHT."

that the Eighth Wonder would reply "You," and by apprehension of all the delicious emotions that would flood within him if she did thus reply. But her reply, which turned out caused him to tremble with emotions very like those of another kind.

"I feel sure," replied the Eighth Wonder, "that it will be that Mr. Gilroy. He is clever, don't you think? I've often thought what a striking face he has; quite the most intellectual looking of all the members."

"Oh, yes, I should think he's almost certain to win it."

Edward, who for twelve minutes had been morally unable to remove himself from the house, suddenly was able physically to remove himself in much less than one; and he walked home, as has been said, on the one part in rapture, on the other boiling with a furious and most terrible hatred of the intellectual-looking Mr. Gilroy.

* * *

THEN there was the time (and it was not so very long afterward) that Edward was walking with the Eighth Wonder on a Saturday afternoon in a secluded tract of Hampstead Heath. The Eighth Wonder had taken off her gloves and was carrying them in her right hand. Her left hand bare, brown, small, capable, exquisite Edward, he had, or imagined, it was not until some time later that he realized her position in the wonders of the world, and this realization was yet to come. But I knew it, as I have told you, all along, and in reporting moments supreme as was that in which he placed his lips to hers. I get rather flurried and cannot help anticipating things a little.

"Do you mind?" said Edward, and helped himself for the voice in which he said it, because it came out to his very great surprise and vexation as a husky squeak.

"She did not appear to mind. She said no word. The only sign she gave was a faint tide of color in her cheeks.

The thumping of Edward's heart

could be heard, as he believed, not only throughout the house, but throughout the boundaries of the entire parish of Hampstead. He interlaced the five fingers of his hand between the five fingers of the hand of the eighth wonder of the world and held it palm to palm. Then Edward, terrified that the thumping of his heart could now be heard at Charing Cross, and that certainly it would burst within his breast and suffocate him unless something were done, stopped and did the only thing that could possibly avert so disastrous a calamity. He stopped and stooped and placed his lips upon the lips of the eighth wonder of the world; and immediately the duress of his heart was stayed and he knew that he owned the eighth wonder of the world, and he felt, furthermore, that he owned the whole of the round world whose eighth wonder she was, its riches, its glories, and all that there-

was.

I am a little wrong in saying it was at this moment that Edward knew he owned the eighth wonder, because as I have said, though he knew from the first moment he set eyes upon that Clarry was more wonderful than anything he had ever imagined, it was not until some time later that he realized her position in the wonders of the world, and this realization was yet to come. But I knew it, as I have told you, all along, and in reporting moments supreme as was that in which he placed his lips to hers. I get rather flurried and cannot help anticipating things a little.

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was.

I am sorry I cannot describe this hat, but I have no aptitude whatever for fashion-plate stuff. Edward certainly could not describe it; he had no words in which to express what he thought about it. But he had profound sympathy with the feelings of all Edward in matters like this, so I say simply that it was a hat which attracted attention, and I leave it at that.

Far worse became the affair when they arrived at the tea gardens. Clarry was by now well aware that something was wrong, but she had no idea what was wrong; and when Edward, first very agitated and then very impishly and sharply, refused to sit at a table in the middle of the gardens and insisted upon one remote and obscure, Clarry also became vexed, and the quarrel, though not yet joined, was afoot. Edward throughout the meal spoke scarcely a word. Obscure though the table was, it appeared to the distorted imagination of Edward to be by far the most conspicuous of all the tables and to be, moreover, the one and only center of observation of the occupants of the tables. So distorted and indistinct, indeed, had the imagination of Edward by now become that it appeared to him not only that the hundreds of eyes fixed upon him were accusing him of responsibility for the hat, but that in some mysterious way the hat was not, in fact, upon Clarry's head but upon his own head.

"I thought," said Clarry presently, after an enormous interval, in which she had twice suggested movement and twice suffered rebuff—"I thought we were going in a boat on the river?"

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TO this and to further interrogation on the point there were responded by Edward only some vague, indistinct mumbleings. Clarry received these as long as, and, indeed, longer than, even an eighth wonder of the world can be expected to receive them; and then said Clarry, in-

fusing to do, the dragon commanded him to remain in the sitting room and departed, crackling.

Next the house was entered by a doctor, carrying a black bag even more sinister than the brown bag of the crackling dragon, and there followed now for Edward, incarcerated in the sitting room and hearing always mysterious sounds and sometimes very lamentable and heartbreaking sounds, an evening more terrible than any he had ever imagined.

He knew that Clarry was in most dreadful extremity; and for the reason that his imagination never yet had approached this extremity that was hers, he explored now with the terror of the unknown and himself encircled. He was assured that Clarry must die. Sometimes he prayed and sometimes—did not pray; sometimes, bowed upon the table, in impotence he beat his head upon his hands; sometimes, pacing the floor, in dread he held his breath and paused to listen.

He was thinking now over his vise behavior in the matter of that lamentable business of the hat; and he was wondering if Clarry, dying, was remembering his abominable conduct then displayed toward her; and he was in the last depths of misery and grief; and then to his extreme terror he heard the doctor departing. Going without speaking to him! Was it that he did not wish to break the news? He blundered to the door and in his agitation scarcely could open it; and then opened it and caught the doctor.

"Hello!" said the doctor. "Didn't know you were in. Thought they'd turned you out. Well, it's all gone splendidly. She's fine. You're a happy father and all that. Congratulate you. Son and heir. Splendid, what? Good night, good night."

* * *

HE returned to the sitting room. Inexpressible tumult disorganized him. He first was on his knees in gratitude. He next was on his feet in ecstasy. Clarry! A son! He was there hours as it appeared to him, torn by these new stresses, plunged from them back to his earlier anguish, then to his new tumults again, before, at last, a message came to him to release him.

The crackling dragon crackled in, and told him, grudgingly, that he might now go upstairs for one minute—

"And no talk, please."

Then he went into the room and, even the crackling dragon, noticing his face as he came in and perhaps taking compassion on him, went and crackled herself out in the passage, and Mrs. Hunt went with her; and he was alone with the stupendous and exquisite mystery that was here. And when he saw Clarry lying on the bed, and when he saw lying upon her lovely arm and head against her darling breast the man-child that in mystery and agony she had delivered out of her body to him, he knew then that she was the Eighth Wonder of the World; and the wonder and glory of her and the miracle and mystery of her engulfed him and overcame him; and he fell on his knees at the bed, and bowed down his head and cried very much, with real tears, dripping; and once he cried (I don't know why) "Oh, my God!"; and once he said, very brokenly, "You are wonderful, wonderful"; and soon after that they crackled in to him from the passage and got him out and pushed him down the stairs, and he went down wiping his eyes because his eyes were streaming.

That is all. But the point is that he now knew clearly and definitely what until now he had never definitely known, though frequently surmised. And on the very next morning, as he was proceeding to his office, his head enormously high and his chest enormously extended, and as he was perceiving his son, in successive pictures, as commander-in-chief of the British army, first son, lord, poet laureate, president of the Royal Academy, lard chancellor and Archbishop of Canterbury, and was debating within himself which of the insignia of these was least worthy to be borne upon the breast of his son (then weighing seven pounds and fourteen ounces)—as he was doing all this, he was accosted by one who came up to him and said "Hello, Bryant, haven't seen you for years. Do you remember me? I'm Gilroy. By Jove, do you know, I believe the last time I saw you was two years ago at the Excelsior Literary Society, when they put up a competition for the best essay on the Eighth Wonder of the World. I got the first prize, you know."

"By Jove," said Edward, "you're welcome to it, old man. I got the Eighth Wonder."

(Copyright, 1924.)

The Match Industry.

If all the matches used in the world in one day were placed end to end they would reach to the moon and 10,000 miles beyond. Think how important these baby explosive bombs are in the everyday business of the world!

American matches are usually made of pine wood cut in a round shape. In Europe they are made of aspen and are cut square. Sheets of aspen wood can be dried artificially in a couple of hours and made into matches within the next hour. Thus three hours may see a change from an aspen log to a few hundred or more boxes of matches. But pine has to be allowed to stand for a couple of years before it is sufficiently seasoned to be used.

There is more involved in the matter of dipping match sticks into the fire-producing solution that makes the head than one might suppose. Match heads are really the product of much chemical research. For instance, people like their matches a cheerful color, so the chemical has to be dyed a pleasant blue or red. They must be double tip, capable of being lit on any surface—a wall, a stove, your shirt. They must not leave a streak or scratch after them. They must not be noisy and pop up at the person using them.

The matches must be made so they will not flash up too soon. They must have no sharp edges, but must be smooth and oval so the heads will not rub against one another in people's pockets and light each other. They must be fairly waterproof and windproof, and must burn without smoke or odor.